

Teague Amendment to Direct \$10 Billion to Deficit Reduction Receives Unanimous, Bi-partisan Support

Washington, DC- Thursday, Congressman Harry Teague voted to make a historic investment in student aid that will help students and families pay for college -- and at no cost to taxpayers.

The Student Aid and Fiscal Responsibility Act (SAFRA) (H.R. 3221) will expand access to a college education to more American students, transform early education opportunities, and build a world-class community college system. The bill passed the House by a vote of 253 to 171.

SAFRA seeks to reform the federal student loan system to save taxpayers \$87 billion and increases government grant and loan assistance for college tuition. Over the next ten years, SAFRA will invest more than \$283.5 million in New Mexico, including \$117.9 million in 2nd Congressional District

, increasing the maximum annual Pell Grant scholarship to \$5,550 in 2010 and to \$6,900 by 2019. 7 million students already receiving Pell Grants will see an increase to \$6,900 by 2019 from \$5,350 today and a total of 22,895 students in the 2

nd

Congressional District will be eligible for a Pell Grant award in the 2010-2011 academic year.

Congressman Harry Teague offered two amendments to the Student Aid and Fiscal Responsibility Act. The first amendment, clarified that \$10 billion in taxpayer savings would be specifically directed to deficit reduction.

Speaking in support of his \$10 billion deficit reduction amendment, Congressman Harry Teague stated, "Today, with the passage of this legislation, we save \$10 billion dollars of taxpayer money. I am proud of the bi-partisan and unanimous support I received for taking the \$10 billion dollars we saved by streamlining the system and locking it away for the purpose of deficit reduction. We are locking it away to make sure our children and grandchildren don't have to pay it off later."

Congressman Harry Teague's second amendment, gives community colleges the ability to prioritize programs that serve veterans and increase programs for workforce training in energy related fields.

"This amendment will help the community colleges in my district access resources to serve the many veterans across New Mexico and help my constituents get training for energy jobs, which represent many of the good paying jobs available in southern New Mexico.

SAFRA also keeps interest rates low on government-subsidized loans, makes substantial investments in early childhood education, expands the Perkins low-cost loan program to every U.S. college, and simplifies the process of applying for student financial aid. In 2008, 39,350 subsidized student loans were granted to students in New Mexico.